

5139

~~SECRET~~

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED
1998

R/MM
17 March 1965

Imports of Vanadium by Communist Countries

Information on actual imports of vanadium by communist countries is limited, for the most part, to (1) COCOM information on shipments of vanadium pentoxide of U.S. origin which is re-exported to Czechoslovakia, (2) Bureau of Foreign Commerce reports on shipments by COCOM countries to communist countries, and

CZECHOSLOVAKIA. During the period 1 Jan 60 - 31 Dec 64, Czechoslovakia is known to have imported about short tons of vanadium (content of ore, concentrate, pentoxide, ...) from the United States and at least 63 tons of vanadium pentoxide from England, Finland, Luxembourg and Switzerland. It is assumed that she also received a minimum of 160 tons of vanadium pentoxide of U.S. origin, which was approved for re-export or for re-processing and re-export from Austria. Czechoslovakia's trade agreements with Norway for 1960 and 1961 provided for Czech imports of up to 850 tons of vanadium slags, a commodity which Czechoslovakia also imports, in undetermined quantities, from the U.S.S.R. Recent information indicates that slag imports from the U.S.S.R. have been discontinued temporarily because of limitations on Czech facilities for processing the raw material. Czechoslovakia evinces continued interest in imports of vanadium pentoxide; requests for permission to re-export at least 160 tons of U.S.-origin material to Czechoslovakia were received in 1964, none of which are known to have been allowed.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

COMMUNIST CHINA. Chinese imports of vanadium have been chiefly in the form of ingots and ferrovanadium. In 1960, and again in 1961, these imports are thought to have totalled about \$8 million worth from Austria alone. Small quantities were also imported from Japan, France, and Belgium-Luxembourg. In 1962, there is evidence of imports of only 22.3 metric tons of pure vanadium from Switzerland and the United Kingdom. No shipments are recorded for 1963, and in 1964, a visitor (of unknown reliability) reported that China produces all the vanadium she needs.

NORTH KOREA. During the four-year period 1 Jan 1960 - 1 Jan 64, North Korea has imported from Japan 806 metric tons of ferrovanadium, 28 tons of vanadium ingots, slabs and pellets, and 20 tons of vanadium ores and concentrates. Shipments of 307 tons of ferrovanadium in 1963 were more than double those of any preceding year, although the 1961 contract called for shipment of 300 tons and the 1962 contract for 250 tons.

U.S.S.R. At one time, Soviet production of vanadium satisfied domestic requirements and permitted limited exports to other communist countries. However, it appears that in recent years production has not kept pace with increasing demands due to rapid depletion of the operating deposits and long lags in the construction of new facilities, both at the new deposits and in the metallurgical plants which process the vanadium-containing materials. The U.S.S.R. has signed trade agreements with Finland providing for Soviet imports of 500 metric tons of vanadium pentoxide per year in 1962, 1965 and 1966-70. In 1963, the

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

U.S.S.R. proposed to barter its chrome and rare earths for vanadium pentoxide from Austria, but it is not known whether or not this was accomplished.

OTHERS. The Bureau of Foreign Commerce lists exports from Belgium-Luxembourg of 10 tons of ferrovanadium to Hungary and 26 tons to Poland in 1963.

~~SECRET~~